

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NATO 05241 131947Z
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SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC ASSEMBLY DRAFT REPORT ON EURO-
PEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION

REF: (A) NATO 4888 (DTG 071618Z JUN 77, NOTAL), (B)
NATO 5018 (DTG 091906Z JUN 77)

THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF PARAS 27-32 OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC
ASSEMBLY DRAFT REPORT ON EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION BY
DUTCH PARLIAMENTARIAL KLAAS G. DE VRIES; THIS IS THE
PORTION OF THE TEXT THAT DISCUSSES THE FRENCH ROLE IN THE
INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAM GROUP, REFERED TO IN REFTELS
(FULL REPORT POUCHED TO EUR/RPM:ATTN:MR. SAVAGE).

BEGIN TEXT:
FRANCE

27. THE FUTURE PROGRESS AND DIRECTION OF THE EPG CLEARLY
DEPENDS TO A LARGE EXTENT ON THE ATTITUDE OF FRANCE. FOR
THE MOMENT, FRANCE PARTICIPATES FULLY IN ALL ACTIVITIES OF
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THE EPG BUT IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE PROGRAMME BEING
FOLLOWED BY THE GROUP TO DATE IS VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH
FRENCH THINKING.

28. FRENCH ARMAMENT POLICY FOLLOWS FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY
WHICH IS BASED ON THE NOTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. FOR
FRANCE, NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY MEANS EACH COUNTRY RETAINING

THE FREE DETERMINATION OF ITS OPTIONS AND DECISIONS. FRANCE IS, THEREFORE, OPPOSED TO ANY FORMAL STRUCTURED APPROACH TO ARMAMENTS COOPERATION AS THIS COULD INFRINGE OR CONSTRAIN THIS INDEPENDENCE. FRENCH OFFICIALS MAINTAIN THAT FRANCE IS IN FAVOUR OF COOPERATION BUT ON A LIMITED "AD HOC" BASIS AND THEY POINT TO THE MANY BILATERAL CO-OPERATIVE PROJECTS SHE HAS DEVELOPED.

29. FRANCE IS SCEPTICAL OF "MAGIC FORMULAS" SUCH AS THE TWO-WAY STREET. HER OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES CAN ONLY BE WORTHWHILE AFTER EUROPE HAS DEVELOPED TRUE COOPERATION. TOO MUCH HASTE BEFORE THIS HAPPENS WILL ONLY LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT AND RECRIMINATION. FRANCE IS NOT AGAINST EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND AGAIN HER OFFICIALS POINT TO THE NUMBER OF AGREEMENTS OF THIS TYPE BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO CHANGE THE PRESENT IMBALANCE IN PURCHASES THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE.

30 FRENCH OFFICIALS ARE ALSO CRITICAL OF THE EMPHASIS ON STANDARDIZATION FOR A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL REASONS -- USING FEWER TYPES FACILITATES THE TASK OF THE ENEMY WHO HAS FEWER COUNTER MEASURES TO TAKE; IT RESULTS IN DE FACTO SPECIALISATION BY INDUSTRIES OR EVEN COUNTRIES WHICH COULD UPSET THE LABOUR MARKET AND IMPLY THE ABANDONMENT OF SOVEREIGNTY; IT WOULD BRING ABOUT NEAR MONOPOLIES AND HENCE RESULT IN MORE EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT AND FINALLY, MULTI-LATERAL COOPERATIVE PROJECTS WOULD PLACE RESTRICTIONS ON

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THE RIGHT TO EXPORT. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT FRANCE PREFERS TO EMPHASISE INTEROPERABILITY, WHICH GUARANTEES THAT ARMIES CAN OPERATE TOGETHER BUT DOES NOT INVOLVE THE NUMBER OF RESTRICTIONS IMPLIED BY STANDARDISATION.

31. THE EPG THEN IN ITS PRESENT STATE IS IN LINE WITH FRENCH THINKING. IT IS UNSTRUCTURED AS IT HAS NO CENTRAL BUREAUCRATIC MECHANISM, IT IS APPROACHING COOPERATION ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS IN AN AD HOC FASHION, AND IT IS "INDEPENDENT" OF THE ALLIANCE AND THUS HAS NO DIRECT OFFICIAL LINK WITH THE UNITED STATES OR CANADA.

32. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT FOR HOW LONG IT WILL REMAIN IN THIS SHAPE. THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE PRESSURE FROM ANY OF THE OTHER MEMBERS TO PRODUCE AN INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM, IN FACT, IT IS SAID THAT THE ABSENCE OF A BUREAUCRACY CONSTITUTES AN ADVANTAGE. CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF ITS FUTURE DIRECTION, IT IS EVIDENT THAT SEVERAL OF THE OTHER MEMBERS ARE CONCERNED AT THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ALLIANCE IF THE FRENCH LINE IS ALLOWED TO PREDOMINATE. THE

PROBLEM, THEREFORE, WILL BE TO FIND METHODS OF
BUILDING LINKS TO THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT ALIENATING
FRENCH INTERESTS.

END TEXT. STREATOR

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